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ABSTRACT

This report analyzes and documents the ways that existing educational service systems have successfully modified their roles in order to improve school-to-adult-life transition services for students with disabilities. The report is based on findings from development of a model cooperative transition services system, which revealed that new roles are crucial to the implementation of a fully functioning transition services program. The report is designed to provide practical ideas for resourceful school systems planners, to build an enhanced transition program by shifting roles rather than requiring costly additional resources. The report explains the role shifting research model and identifies problem areas and change functions involved in role shifting. Also analyzed are trends in role shifting patterns and change strategies, such as creating new positions to coordinate vocational and special education; creating the roles of case manager, job coach, and job developer; changing teachers' roles to emphasize community-based instruction; etc. The report also reviews funding strategies for transition programs, lists critical factors for change, and offers personnel planning guidelines. (JDD)

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Analysis of Role-Shifting Patterns in Transition

Education Transition Center



Program, Curriculum, and Training Unit
California State Department of Education
Special Education Division
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Analysis of Role-Shifting Patterns in Transition

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Table of Contents

Preface.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Introduction.....	1
The Research Model.....	5
Problem Areas and Change Functions.....	8
New Trends and Strategies for Change.....	11
Isolated, Yet Noteworthy Role Shifts.....	18
Funding Strategies.....	20
Critical Factors for Change.....	23
Personnel Planning Guidelines.....	25
Directory of Contributor.....	27

Preface

Trying to demonstrate how roles have been changed within an organization in a written format is quite a challenge. Any administrator who has been involved with or responsible for a significant role change knows that in order to understand the changes, "you just had to be there." And many would say that even being there didn't help in explaining the change, that it was simply inexplicable. Nonetheless, any form of communication is limiting to some extent and we have taken our best shot at explaining how some schools have been able to successfully create new roles or change existing ones to be better able to transition students from school to adult life.

One definition is probably critical to the reader before moving on to the actual text of the document. What do we mean by transition? Transition is a process that in an educational context supports the passage of a student from school to work and from childhood to a quality adult life. The Department of Education has further defined transition as having four components: foundation, process, culmination, and follow up. This broad based approach emphasizes that in order for a student to successfully adjust to adult life, the school must examine nearly every aspect of its programming. We agree with this broader approach to needed reforms. However, in order to make our objectives realistic, we concentrated our investigation on role changes in secondary education programs.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge Tom Murphy, the recently retired Director of Special Education for the Santa Barbara High School District for encouraging our pursuit of this project. Tom always tirelessly gave of his time and resources to help define the "cutting edge" in special education. We hope this work carries on in the same tradition set by Mr. Murphy.

We would like to thank the members of our advisory panel who assisted us in the critical first stages of organization of this project: Dr. Patt Kearly of the Education Transition Center, Dr. Judy Grayson of the University of Southern California,⁵ Dr. Thomas Backer of the Human Interaction Research Institute.

We would like to thank Dave Jameson, an independent consultant and former President of the American Society for Training and Development for his suggestions on how to organize our inquiry.

Jane Steiner of the Western Regional Resource Center and Pat Dougan, Coordinator, Transition Services and WorkAbility went out of their way to provide us with resource assistance. Heather Kaney from the Education Transition Center was likewise an especially helpful resource person. Patt Kearly from the Education Transition Center did a splendid job of organizing these projects under difficult conditions and we appreciate her support and encouragement.

Our special thanks go to Dan Hulbert from the Whittier Union High School District and Devi Jameson of the Richmond Unified School Districts for the generous amounts of time they gave us and for their willingness to unselfishly share the fruits of their intensive labors.

We are also grateful to all the contributors listed in the directory who provided us with information. And we would like to additionally thank those who took the time to send us resource materials.

We want to thank our friend and colleague Van Woolley for his help in editing sections of this document.

We would like to thank Gretchen Grul, Catherine Adams, Carol Reese, and Marion Coleman in the Santa Barbara Special Education Department for their support on the project.

We owe the pleasing appearance of the document to the efforts of our professional desktop publishers, Laura Jaffe in Santa Barbara, California, and Marjorie Jassowski in Sacramento, California.

Finally we want to acknowledge all the transition program "pathfinders" we did not have the opportunity to contact in what had to be a limited sampling of innovators. We received nominations of many other persons to contact. They were either unavailable at the time we contacted them or time caught up to us and we had to call off further data inquiries. If you are in the group we missed this time around in our inquiry, our acknowledgements are extended nevertheless. We hope there will be other opportunities to work with you.

Introduction

Need Statement

The purpose or major goal of this project was to analyze and document the ways that existing educational service systems have successfully modified their roles in order to be more able to transition students with disabilities from school to work and a quality adult life.

The successful implementation of transition programs in the schools, as with any quality educational service, will require the right people positioned in the right places to make the necessary changes. We know that education is already a labor intensive business. More than eighty percent of total costs in education are personnel expenditures. We also know there are many personnel functions necessary to create successful transitions for students that are not being performed. In order to execute the changes that are necessary to successfully transition students with disabilities we need someone to:

- develop awareness with employers and in the community that students can succeed in jobs and programs with the right structure and support.
- provide effective instruction in building student self-esteem.
- provide support to less able students "on the job."
- assure that linkages and productive relationships are established with adult service providers and other service agencies.
- follow up students after graduation, find out how well they are doing and feed the data back to the system so that the evaluation system is strengthened and services can be made more effective.
- provide information and support to parents so they can become facilitators to their youngsters to help them make effective transitions.

These are but a few of the more than forty critical personnel functions that the authors of this report have identified as essential role gaps that will need to be filled if educational programs are to successfully transition students with disabilities. These personnel needs have been identified over the past three years during the process of implementing a major project to create a model cooperative transition services system in the Santa Barbara High School District.¹ This role shifting research project was undertaken by the district because it became apparent that new personnel and/or new roles are crucial to the implementation of a fully functioning transition services program. The project is seen as

¹ The Santa Barbara High School District received a two year demonstration grant, from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in Washington, D.C., 1985-1986.

an opportunity for the Santa Barbara district, as well as the readers of this report to identify the personnel changes that are necessary for an effective transition program to be fully realized.

The Goals of the Report

This report provides a comprehensive review of personnel roles pertaining to the implementation of transition programs for students with disabilities. Various personnel roles and functions have been analyzed and the results have been synthesized to contribute to a comprehensive transition model for personnel roles and staffing structures.

This document is intended to be used primarily by administrators and planners in local school systems (district special education supervisors/directors, specialists, SELPA administrators/personnel, and superintendents or high school regular education administrators).

The document is also seen as having value for state department of education planners/policy makers. Other potential product users include members of Special Education Community Advisory Councils, School Board Members, Area Developmental Disability Boards, and administrators of adult service providers such as Regional Centers or Departments of Rehabilitation, and special parent support groups in the community. Even though these groups and others may derive benefit from the report, we wish to emphasize it is developed with the intention of being used primarily by school district special education administrators.

The goals of this report are to enable the intended user to:

- be able to find role shifts or new roles that have been created to facilitate transition at little or no extra cost to the system.
- review specific strategies that were used to achieve the changes. The school system planner will be able to see various ways that colleagues have gone about implementing the changes.
- know clearly what are the necessary personnel functions that need to be planned for in a school system so that the administrator/planner can proceed through their own strategic planning process more quickly and effectively.

The overarching goal this product aims to achieve is to provide some answers to the proverbial "Yes, but...." response that is naturally received when all the transition service innovations are proposed that are needed in order to better transition students from school to employment and a successful adulthood. The response to the "transition challenge" made by

the persons in charge of operating programs is, "Yes, but WHO is going to do all these things? Who is going to develop the jobs? Who is going to manage the cases and work with the adult service providers? Who is going to convince my teachers that they need to teach a more functional curriculum? Who is going to go out and "shadow" the students on work assignments so they don't get fired the first day? I have to go to two hundred IEP meetings a year, evaluate forty staff, plan all our inservices, handle parent and staff problems, etc. etc. etc. I agree that we need to change. But where are we going to get the help we need to change with already overloaded staff workloads and no signs of increases in resources? Who's going to do all those things and where can I find the resources?" This report is intended to provide practical examples, some of which will serve as ideas for the resourceful school system planner to build a program that will enhance the chances of success for the special education student in his or her adult life.

Is this product for you?

We have designed the following little "quiz" to help you determine whether this report will be worth your time. Answer each question yes or no. The answers are on the following page?

1. Are you working for a public or non-public school system and dealing primarily with special education students of secondary school age? Or do you have a job as a consultant to those who do?*
2. Do you have a significant supervision responsibility for special education programs or do you have significant influence with the person(s) who do?
3. Do you agree that the secondary special education programs are currently not sufficiently geared to preparing students for employment and success in the adult world?
4. Do you have support above your own position for role shifts in current personnel in order to support your belief in the need to better transition students?
5. Are you willing to invest your own time or the time of others you control, or spend time persuading others to invest time in seeking outside resources to improve programs?
6. Are both you and those above you open to finding creative ways to bring new roles into the system, sometimes breaking with established personnel practice?

* If you are a consultant working with others, answer questions 4-6 for the clientele you have in mind.

7. Do you plan to be around for three years or more?
8. Do you have the willingness to create the time to contact persons listed in the report for further details and visit programs to follow up on the ideas presented here?
9. Have you already taken significant action to change your programs so they are more capable of preparing students for employment and successful adult living?
10. Are you realistic in your expectations of a report such as this?

Answers to Quiz

As you probably guessed, all the answers to the questions on the quiz are yes.

Here's some of the rationale:

1. Working in special education schools?

This research centered on school systems offering services to secondary-aged young people. Other systems were investigated and contacted, but it is primarily school systems that we investigated. This does not mean we do not agree that "transition" is an inter-agency responsibility. It just means that we had limited time and had to focus our effort on the population most directly served by the State Department of Education. We also realize "transition" efforts will only be wholly successful when necessary changes are made throughout the schools, including elementary school classrooms. Again, our time is limited and we had to focus on secondary-aged student programs to get started with the analysis.

2. School system supervision responsibility?

We have a specific target audience in mind for this report. It is the school system planner/coordinator of services for secondary aged young people with disabilities. We realize, however, that the data contained in the report will be of value to others also.

3. Believe in changing programs to better transition youngsters?

If you believe the best way to help these older special education students is to provide more remedial reading courses or to intensify their involvement in the core academic curriculum, this report probably isn't for you. Most of the role changes we found had to do with shifts toward a more functionally oriented employment preparation for special education students. This doesn't mean we agree that this is "where it's at" or where it should be. It does seem to be where the innovation or "role shifting" focus now exists.

4. Support for change above you?

All the major innovators we found had substantial support above themselves for making role changes. This doesn't mean you can't do anything if you don't

have the same support. It does probably mean you will have to go slower to achieve many of the shifts described in the report.

5. Willingness to invest time seeking outside resources?

Wherever we found changed roles, we almost always found there had been an injection of new resources into the system: A Project WorkAbility Program, a Vocational Rehabilitation Grant, JTPA funding, private grants, etc. We set out to find how districts had accomplished role changes without using outside resources. We found few such examples. If this report is to be of use to you, you will have to be willing to go after similar resources.

6. Open to finding creative personnel solutions?

You don't have to be a maverick to get value out of this report, but it probably would help a lot if you are the type of person who is willing to work every possible angle to facilitate change.

7. Be around three years or more?

Most of the people we talked with had been working on making the changes they had accomplished for between five and ten years. We figure the minimum timeline for getting changes in schools, and jobs is three years. It takes that long to just get the trust of those above you to go along with the changes.

8. Willing to contact others mentioned in the report?

This report doesn't have all the answers. But many of the people you'll find listed as contributors can provide more valuable information. There is no substitute for "networking" and spending time with others who have broken ground.

9. Already taken action?

This report will probably be most useful for those districts and agencies that are already in the action mode of making changes to create transition programs. Changing roles, creating new positions represents quite a commitment on the part of a system. There are many steps that precede making personnel changes.

10. Realistic in your expectations?

This is not a sure fire funding directory. Its not a book of job descriptions that you can xerox. It won't tell you how to get teachers with twenty years experience to drop everything they're good at and climb on a new bandwagon. What it is is a compendium of ideas, presented in a way that we hope is useful to you as a creative manager.

So, here's how to analyze your score:

Five or below – There's probably a better use of your time.

Six or seven – Skim it over and give it to someone else.

Eight or nine – Read on, staying tuned to your own applications.

Ten – You probably already know most of what's in here or – you have to bridle your enthusiasm and take it easy. Make sure you look for nuances of "different twists" that might improve a strategy you have already implemented and realize the value of affirmation in what you've already done.

The Research Model

How we Conducted this Research Project

Our first step in conducting the project was to convene an informal panel of advisors to review our original proposal, assist us in coming up with a model for organizing our data, and provide us with suggestions that would further upgrade the course of our research.

That meeting proved highly productive and resulted in several critical outcomes. A mission statement for the project was produced and agreed upon as a group.

MISSION STATEMENT

OUR PROJECT EXISTS TO IDENTIFY SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS THAT HAVE PREVENTED SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND OTHERS RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS FROM EFFECTIVELY ORGANIZING TO ASSIST THESE STUDENTS IN MAKING A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO ADULTHOOD.

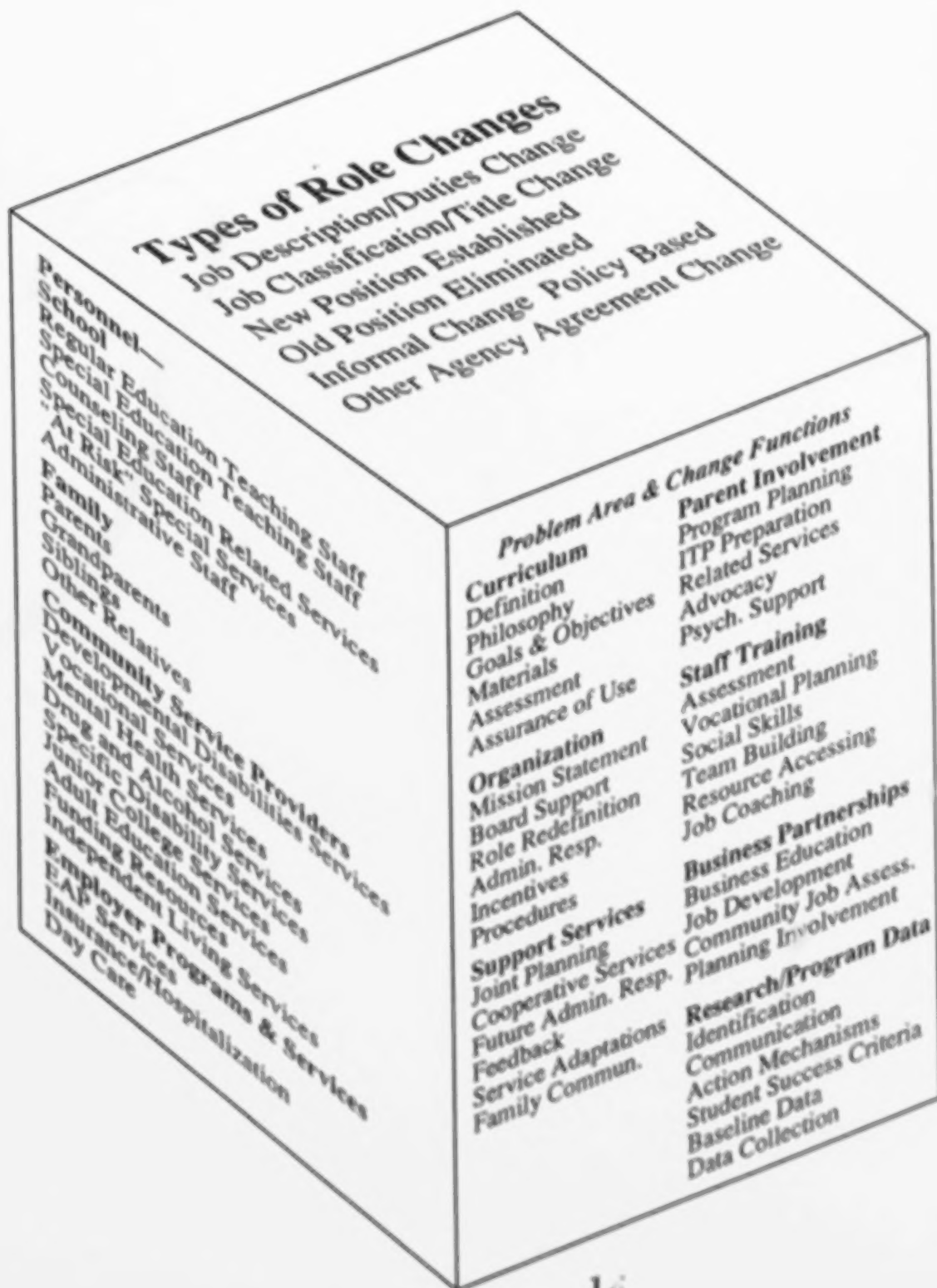
The advisory panel also produced a matrix that provided the organizational rubric for our research. This model is presented on the next page.

In our design, we first agreed on problem area statements that pointed out the major problems faced by the schools in successfully transitioning students. The rationale for this step is that in order to find solutions, you have to first agree on the problems. Next, under each of those problem statements, we left room for interventions that would address the problems. These interventions would later be called the "change functions" shown in the figure. The second dimension of the three sided figure represents all the roles that could impact successful transitions for students. The third side of the figure represents some of the types of role changes that could possibly occur in any given organization serving students with handicaps or students considered "at risk." The three dimensions represent a matrix which would assist us in organizing our further inquiry and later presenting the data.

The advisory panel members also provided input toward critical research questions, the contents of this document, and evaluation criteria by which the product could be evaluated.

Following this initial meeting, the project director and the consultant to the project brainstormed the personnel functions that would need to be present in

"Analysis of Role Shifting" Research Model



a school system if the problem areas were to be adequately addressed. We also designed a structured interview format to assist us in conducting interviews.

With these organizing tools in hand, we began contacting "referral sources" throughout the state and the country that could give us information on where specific role changes had taken place and the names of local contact persons. Following these inquiries, we contacted the local "role changers" and conducted telephone interviews to gather information on what role changes had occurred and how they had occurred.

We then selected two major school systems that had made the most substantial changes in roles and scheduled visitations to those districts, and conducted intensive interviews to collect information on role shifts in those systems.

After completing the visitations, we revised the personnel functions in our original planning matrix to reflect the types of changes that we had actually encountered in the field. The problem areas and personnel functions that resulted are presented in the following pages.

Following our inquiries to the field, we took the data and analyzed the commonalities in the systems we had interviewed to identify the role shifting trends that are presently evident in schools. Finally, we analyzed the data and identified specific strategies for role shifting that might be of assistance to school system planners of transition services.

The results of these efforts are presented in the remaining sections of this report.

**"Analysis of Role,
Shifting"**
**Transition Research Project
Problem Areas & Change
Functions**

Problem Area 1

The school curriculum, as it presently exists does not provide students the necessary skills and attitudes to be successful in the adult world.

- Function 1** Define a functional curriculum.
- Function 2** Agree on your philosophy related to curriculum.
- Function 3** Identify goals and objectives needed for successful transition, but not now taught in the curriculum.
- Function 4** Provide specific materials for teacher use in the implementation of the curriculum.
- Function 5** Provide assessment tools to assure mastery of goals and objectives.
- Function 6** Assure defined curriculum is used by teachers.

Problem Area 2

The school district, as an organization has not redefined its mission, and its structure and roles to facilitate the process of successful student transitions from school to work.

- Function 1** The district mission statement reflects transition goals and objectives.
- Function 2** The Board of Education is supportive of developing policies and regulations that facilitate the transition goals and objectives.
- Function 3** Change the role and function of the special education staff to reflect the emphasis on the successful transition from school to work.
- Function 4** Change the role and function of regular education staff who work with special education students to reflect the emphasis on the transition from school to work.
- Function 5** One administrative role is specifically assigned the operating responsibility of implementing the changes necessary to better facilitate transitions for special education and at risk students.

Function 6 Change the reward and incentive structures for the school district or agency to encourage more transitional services. Incentives to perform the needed transition functions must be provided for both the organization and for individual roles.

Function 7 Change district job descriptions and performance evaluation guidelines to include those duties and responsibilities that will facilitate transition.

Problem Area 3

Many needed support services are still not available and many services that are available are not coordinated.

Function 1 Identify all services available in the public school system ("Regular," vocational, special education, "at risk") to support student transitions from school to adult life.

Function 2 Assign special education staff as liaisons to non-special education school services and develop cooperative work agreements.

Function 3 Working with the agencies, develop service alternatives and service adaptations which will facilitate transition. (Both during school and after school)

Function 4 Identify other agencies that might assist the student after school age, and plan jointly with those agency representatives to provide services to students after high school.

Function 5 Bring available agency representatives into the school system or hook students and families up with available services. Provide cooperative services that require joint funding or joint personnel usage.

Function 6 Develop methods for implementing future plans and specifying the non-school representative with responsibility for the execution of the plans.

Function 7 Receive feedback from non-school agencies on the progress of youngsters receiving their service and adjust school services according to this feedback.

Function 8 Establish systems and procedures within the district/agency for communicating and coordinating other

agency services being provided to the student/client and his/her family.

Function 9 Assign one educational staff person responsible for case management and service coordination for each student transitioning from school to the adult world.

Problem Area 4

Parents are not adequately prepared to assist their children in successfully transitioning from school to the adult world.

Function 1 The school plans with the parent and other agencies for programming and services, both during school and following graduation from school.

Function 2 The school prepares parents to participate meaningfully in their child's individually prescribed service plans.

Function 3 Parents are made aware of available services that will facilitate effective transitions and how to obtain those services.

Function 4 Parents are made aware of the need to support and advocate for their child and are better prepared to provide such advocacy and support.

Function 5 Parents are assisted in providing support to their child and at the same time "letting go" and facilitating the psychological transition to adulthood.

Problem Area 5

Special and regular education staff need to become better skilled in preparing students for successful transitions from school to adult living.

Function 1 Train appropriate educational staff in how to assess student skill levels and attitudes that will influence success in adult living.

Function 2 Provide teaching staff with strategies for assisting students with developing appropriate work habits and skills, initiating the examination of career and vocational choices, and planning future educational and learning opportunities.

- Function 3** Establish competency in special education teaching staff for providing students with specific and systematic strategies they can use on an everyday basis for achieving success in regular classrooms.
- Function 4** Provide teaching staff with specific tools for teaching in the "Affective Domain:" ie-attitudes related to personal responsibility, self-esteem improvement, communication skills related to relationships, social skills.
- Function 5** Provide teaching staff with specific strategies for teaching "independent living skills" ie-using transportation, homemaking, money management, etc.)
- Function 6** Make educational staff aware of available community resources, how to access those resources, and how to work with parents to increase the likelihood that such resources will be used.
- Function 7** Provide intensive drug and alcohol inservice education to school staff members serving the "mildly handicapped."
- Function 8** Train the agency/school staff to coach students and employers who are participating in work experience and job training programs so that special education and at-risk student success in such programs is increased.

Problem Area 6

The school system has not developed partnerships with the business and industry community that result in sufficient job training and work experience sites to assist every special needs youngster in making the transition from school to successful employment.

- Function 1** Educate business and industry representatives on how they can use youngsters with special needs to increase profits and productivity—and to enhance their affirmative action efforts.
- Function 2** Develop a sufficient number of job training and work experience sites in the business and industry and public sector work communities to accommodate all youngsters in need of such experience and training.

- Function 3** Obtain data which identifies where jobs will be for youngsters with special needs in the next three to ten years in the local community.
- Function 4** Involve business and industry representatives in special education transition planning activities.

Problem Area 7

There is a lack of research data and validated program models that will enable educators to implement effective transition programs. The data that does exist is under-accessed and under-utilized.

- Function 1** Identify and study existing programs that provide transition services.
- Function 2** Gather existing research findings related to transition programs and communicate the data to education staff.
- Function 3** Develop planning mechanisms, systems or procedures for acting upon this data.
- Function 4** Identify alternative criteria for measuring the success of a special education or at risk student.
- Function 5** Develop alternative graduation requirement systems for special education students, if such systems do not presently exist.
- Function 6** Collect baseline data related to success criteria.
- Function 7** Establish systems and procedures for collecting the student success/failure data, and act upon it to further improve programs.

Role Shifting Patterns in Transition Programs: New Trends and Strategies for Change

This section provides descriptions of actual role shifts identified during a review of current practice. The shifts found took one of the following forms:²

- a. Specific duties change within a given job description.
- b. A job title changes.
- c. Qualifications for eligibility regarding a certain job change.
- d. The classification of a particular job is upgraded or downgraded within the personnel system.
- e. A new job position and/or classification is created.
- f. An old job position and/or classification is eliminated.
- g. Two or more roles are merged into one.
- h. There is a change in role due to a specific policy change.
- i. There is a change in role related to an informal and undocumented policy change.
- j. There is a change in role due to a new agreement with another service provider.
- k. There is an institutional change in the mission and role of the service or agency.

We realize the classifications provided above are not totally distinct. Several of these changes may be included in any one given role shift. For instance, an inter-agency agreement to provide a service is also a "policy change." We present the categories because they may be useful to readers of the report who may wish to brainstorm possible role shifts in their systems related to one of these sub-categories of role shifts.

In order to identify the shifts, we talked with transition program innovators throughout the country, but mainly in the Western United States. We concentrated our interviewing in California, talking mostly with school district representatives. Districts varied widely in size and socioeconomics. Although time considerations on this project prevented us from being as comprehensive in our search as we would have wished, we still feel we did a fair sampling of innovating school systems. Because we realize we could not be totally comprehensive in our investigation, we are not mentioning specific districts by name when we refer to role shifts. In a companion document to this report, we will provide directory information on the contributors to the report.

² Tom Backer, President of Human Interaction Research Institute in Los Angeles served as a member of our advisory panel and contributed significantly toward these classifications.

Informal Policy Support for Change in Upper Management Roles

1. In systems that had changed dramatically to facilitate transition there was evidence of a change in attitude toward special education services at the top levels of the school system.

This could be classified as an "attitudinal" role change that was driven by someone in a position of authority in the school system or district. Usually a superintendent or assistant superintendent encouraged a change toward a more functional and vocationally oriented special education program that focused on better preparing students for the "real world."

Title Changes to Emphasize Transition

2. In several school systems, we saw title changes to reflect an emphasis on more vocational or "transitional" programming.

The most dramatic example of a title change was in two districts that retitled their teachers in special day classes "Transition Specialists." In one district these programs were also moved off the high school campuses to sites where ROP and adult education programs were offered. In another district the title was used to describe a special position designed to serve adult developmentally disabled persons. The position focuses total attention on facilitating the successful employment and independence of the individual. Nearly all training is in the community and is employment related.

New Positions - Coordination of Vocational and Special Education

3. In some school systems a new position or a substantial part of a position has been created to facilitate the placement of special education students into vocational education programs.

This position is generally a "quasi-administrative" facilitator role. This person works with vocational educators to encourage their acceptance of students with handicaps. Informal inservice training is given on the different learning styles of special education students; time is spent briefing and preparing the vocational educator for the student, and special assistance or aide time is arranged if needed. This person is "on call" to deal with any problems that may occur in the vocational placement of a youngster with handicaps. This strategy has been used to facilitate vocational educator acceptance of special education students in both vocational classes and ROP training programs in school systems. In one of the most apparently successful applications of this strategy, a person with ten years of experience facilitating the student placements is adamant about one "angle" on the

use of the liaison role: In his opinion, the role must be performed by a vocational educator with special education inservice training, rather than a special educator. This position is usually financed through the use of the ten percent "set aside" of vocational education money that is mandated to be used for special education students.

New Positions - Itinerant Teachers/Aides Teach "Career/Vocational Skills"

4. A "Career Education" teaching or teaching assistant role is created within the special education department of the school system.

This is a new position that we found in several school systems throughout the state. An itinerant teacher or classified instructor travels from special classroom to special classroom teaching "units" on career education. The units usually focus on job seeking skills, and prevocational skills. In some cases, the "career education specialist" also provides consultative services to the teacher, demonstrating vocationally oriented curriculum materials or providing tips on strategies for infusing career education into the special day class curriculum. In most of the cases we found this position to be classified, non-certificated. Interestingly enough, the persons we interviewed in this role did not report the typical difficulties usually encountered by the "resource teacher" providing consultation to the classroom teacher. This lack of difficulty may be owing to the fact that the "career educator" always teaches in the classroom or it could be because it may actually be easier for the teacher to accept resources from a person who is below them on the pay scale/pecking order. These positions were usually financed through the use of Project Work-Ability or JTPA funds.

New Position or Change in Duties - Management "Change Agent"

5. One administrative or facilitative position is created to concentrate on building a transition program for special education students.

As the saying goes, "If you want to get the job done, give somebody the job." We found this to be true in the examples we found of innovative programs. What was also interesting was that the person who "got the job done" was often not in the role of a director of special education or even a supervisor of secondary special education. Frequently, some sort of a separate role was created or emerged for achieving the transition-related changes. Our speculation is that the role(s) of director and supervisor of special education are tightly "bound" with activities required by law, regulation and local policy require-

ments (eg. IEP meeting attendance, teacher evaluation). Therefore, someone else is needed to emerge as a "hands-on" manager of the innovations that need to occur. We did find that the special education administrators were very closely involved with the few cases we observed of major systems change. They supported the changes and assisted in "steering" innovation. When special education directors or supervisors played a more direct role in program innovation, we found that they were able to create administrative support positions under them that provided coverage for the non-innovative, yet necessary aspects of special education administration.

There was no one dominant way that districts were finding to create the "change agent" role. In a small rural area in Oregon, a teacher actually took on the role in addition to her other responsibilities and organized a cooperative effort between districts and agencies in her area. In a few places in California it sounded as if the real catalyst for change were persons with classified status brought in under Project WorkAbility. It should be noted, however, that major role changes that permeated a system only occurred through the efforts of dedicated and committed professional administrators, or in some cases a person new to administration who stayed in the system long enough to earn the necessary respect and natural authority to create the changes.

Some universities are currently offering programs to train "Transition Specialists" under funding incentives from the U.S. Office of Education. It seems to us that the appropriate positioning of such persons in roles within school systems will be critical. From what we have observed in our investigation of role shifts and what we know about change in school systems, two factors would seem critical to the success of a "Transition Specialist" position:

1. The person should work hand in hand with an administrator totally supportive of transition-related changes who has the natural authority to facilitate change. Putting a "Transition Specialist" into an established system – with the expectation of creating system change – without this form of support is akin to throwing a body to the wolves.
2. The position should be created with the realization it will take time to produce the desired results. The really substantive examples of role changes we saw took between one and three years to "kick off" and six to ten years to solidify as "hard" positions or standard personnel operating procedure. The person put into a position of facilitating changes should have a successful track record and there should be reason to expect they will stay within the system for a significant period of time.

New Position – Case Managers

6. *The role of "case manager" for transition has been created.*

Do any of these complaints sound familiar? "Parents and the students have no idea of what services are available after high school Different teachers are all doing their own thing with the kids There's no coordination It's no wonder they are confused The Regional Center worker told the family the school should do that Well, I'll tell ya. I got a couple ideas what they could do, too We've written all these inter-agency agreements. But there's no one to follow through on a student by student basis"

All the above are varying forms of coordination problems. The good news is they can be reduced considerably through the use of what we know as a "case manager." A case manager is someone who offers no – or very little – direct service to the youngster. Their primary role is to see to it the students have the best available combination of services to meet his/her needs and that those services are coordinated. The role is certainly not new. It operates more and more in human and social service agencies. At least in part, case management services used to be available in the school systems through the school social worker. Cost cutbacks throughout the late sixties and seventies all but eliminated this position in the schools. Our problem is now that if we are to really do an effective job of transitioning students to employment and the adult world, we need someone coordinating the services to the student, ideally someone who is inside the system where most of the services are being offered.

We found this function coming back into the secondary special education system under the title of "Vocational Coordinator" and sometimes being included in the job description of the "Vocational Counselor." The position appears to be an especially useful way of providing services to the mildly handicapped in Resource Specialist Programs. Resource Specialist teachers at the secondary level presently work under enormous pressure to facilitate IEP's for students and to teach. Now, most resource specialists are preoccupied with providing some form of tutorial support or specialized instruction to support graduation requirements. The "Vocational Coordinator" assigned a caseload of RSP students can assure these students are also provided with opportunities to be employable and receive other related services available through the school and other agencies. With more severely involved students, there is usually an increased complexity to the array of service they are receiving. There is a need to coordinate with the California Regional Center case manager and to carefully oversee the school services the child is receiving.

This responsibility, when performed by the certificated "Vocational Counselor," was usually observed to be a partial responsibility. In other areas, it was established as a classified position, paid higher than an aide but lower than a certificated teacher or counselor, and was a full time assignment.

New Positions - Supported Employment/Job Coaches

7. Supported employment or "job coaches" have been created as new positions to provide on-the-job training/coaching support to individual students or small groups of students on the job.

The hiring of job coaches or supported employment specialists closely parallels the philosophical shift in special needs vocational education away from the "pre-vocational skill training," intended to get the youngster "ready" to work, toward the "place and train" approach to employability training. In the latter approach, a student is first placed in a realistic job setting in the outside world and the necessary support is provided to the young person while he or she is learning that specific job. Research indicates that this approach is necessary in order for more severely handicapped learners to master a job placement in natural employment environments. This need for training in the workplace occurs because severely handicapped learners often cannot transfer skills learned in classroom settings to workplace settings. Several districts have converted traditional teacher aide positions to supported employment positions and are using teacher aides more and more as job coaches for lower functioning special day class students. This role shift is supported by an increasing knowledge of how to effectively provide supported employment training.^{3,4}

New Positions - Job Developers

8. The position of "Job Developer" is becoming more common in special education environments.

Typically, work experience coordinators or vocational counselors assigned to special education have had to develop new jobs, supervise students on the job, and in some cases provide additional support to employers or students. As a result, the numbers of students receiving employment assistance in the schools has been limited and there have been little or no opportunities for lower functioning students to successfully function in outside job placements. A job developer can concentrate fully on working with the business, industry and public sector employment communities to develop work experience employment opportunities for students.

As the number of realistic employment or work training opportunities is increased, more and more special education students can receive a more functional education which will increase their likelihood of successful employment after graduation.

This job development position is made more affordable if the position is shared by cooperating districts through SELPA, County Office of Education or joint district agreements. In one cooperative district, a totally separate position of "Public Relations Specialist" has been created to increase the jobs developed for special education students even more. In this situation the PR specialist works with the regional offices of large companies, or large employers in the community to create the "ground work" for job developers who then go to the local outlets and establish jobs for special education students. This position cuts out the "downtime" waiting for the local Taco Bell to check with the regional headquarters and the sometimes pursuant confusion and delay. Neither the job developer nor the Public Relations position requires formal training in special education. In fact the PR specialist generally is a totally different "bird" than the education professional. By and large, PR people are much more comfortable in business environments and present a fresh perspective in special education and offer a new dimension to the inter-disciplinary special education transition team.

New Agreements Facilitate Special Education Roles in Vocational Technical Job Training Programs

9. There has been a shift toward the usage of more special education staff in vocational-technical job training programs. (Regional Occupation Programs - ROP)

Historically, access to vocational programs has been restricted by the understandable reluctance on the part of some staff in such programs to accept individuals with handicaps. Recently, some real inroads have been made into making these programs more accessible to students with handicaps. Creative ROP, Special Education and Rehabilitation Department administrators have been working together to forge cooperative agreements that bring the necessary special support to the ROP programs to enable more special education students to be successful in these programs. New roles have been created through cooperative funding agreements. In some programs, special education teachers are teaching short basic occupational training classes to prepare

³ Gaylord Ross, Robert et al.: "The Employment Retention Program: Supported Employment of Disabled Youth in Transition." In Press.

⁴ *The Job Coach Training Manual*. Santa Barbara High School District. Available c/o Joe Pasanella SBHSD.

students to be successful in the ROP classroom. As many as thirty part-time tutors have been hired at ROP sites to support special education students in the classwork portions of their vocational training program. In one area, the county schools "loaned" a full time teacher aide to a ROP for two years. Other districts or counties have made use of Project Work-Ability funds to support special education aides at ROP sites. Classified positions have been hired and special staff trained to provide vocational assessments for entry into ROP programs; to pre-assess junior and senior high special education students for ROP program readiness; to conduct "job club" groups; to develop jobs in the community; or to coach students in training at the ROP program. In some programs, special education resource teachers have been assigned to provide direct support to students and to consult with ROP staff on dealing with the special education student should any problems arise.

These innovations are made possible through joint funding agreements worked out between education and rehabilitation personnel. The possibility of such programs is further expanded when districts pool their resources in a cooperative effort.

Policy Change to Community Based Instruction for the Severely Handicapped Creates Changed Role for SH Teacher

10. In programs for the severely handicapped that emphasize community training, there has been a significant role change for the teacher.

Some readers of this document may be aware of the change in teacher role brought about the the movement toward community based instruction for individuals with severe handicaps. Teachers in programs that support this community based instructional model are now working with students in the community and spending much less time in the classroom. Lessons in daily living (shopping, grooming, recreation) take place in those natural settings in the student's own neighborhood whenever possible. Teachers are also spending time supervising and coaching students on jobs, and in many cases developing job sites for students. The teacher role shift that has taken place here is massive. A similar type of shift has taken place for the teacher aide in the community-based program for the severely handicapped. Aides are spending a good deal of time job coaching youngsters, and in some locales the position title has been changed from aide to "job coach." These teaching role shifts have been supported by the training efforts of California universities and the California State Department of Education. The universities have emphasized the model in their pre-service trainings for teachers of the severely handicapped. The

State Department of Education has conducted a statewide training effort in an inservice training model, "The Individualized Critical Skills Model."

It is interesting to note here a "non-shift" that was observed in our investigation. There are by far fewer examples of similar role shifts in teachers teaching special education programs for the more mildly handicapped. Teachers in these positions are under a great deal of pressure to assist students in meeting graduation requirements and the requirements of the core curriculum. Secondly, there is no organized support or retraining mechanism available such as there is in the programs for the severely handicapped. Thirdly, many students and their families resist changes to more functional programs. There was little to lose when the SH teachers began practicing community based instruction. Before community-based instruction, SH students were spending the majority of their time in classrooms doing tasks of questionable value such as puzzle-like activities. So, there was little - or at least less - to lose when the teacher began offering more functional instruction in the community. Many parents of the more mildly handicapped will not support a more functional curriculum because it would mean less time spent on academic instruction that many still see as the most appropriate teacher activity. Lastly, because students spend a good deal of their time in regular high school classes, the scheduling problems are greater. The coherence of the program for the mildly handicapped is probably reduced due to the sheer number of teachers dealing with the student. In many ways, it is much more difficult to manage the program for the learner with milder handicaps. Perhaps for these reasons, we are not seeing the same kind of teacher role shifts in special education teachers and resource specialists serving the more mildly handicapped.

New Agreements Facilitate Better Use of Department of Rehabilitation Counselors

11. The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor from the Department of Rehabilitation is playing an increased role in school district special education programs.

We found increasing examples of active involvement of the Department of Rehabilitation counselors working school systems with special education students. Four particular strategies used in several DR/school district cooperative agreements seem to support significantly more active involvement in the schools. First, in many districts, rehabilitation counselors are physically on site on a regular basis and provided with office space at the school. Secondly, many rehabilitation departments have structured caseloads so that specialists are assigned to high

school aged youth with disabilities. This specialization reduces the number of counselors the schools deal with and improves linkages and communication. Thirdly, specific liaison persons have been identified by the school district to facilitate the relationship with the Department of Rehabilitation. Lastly, some school systems have changed their assessment procedures to assure that DR acceptable and current assessment data is collected on the student by the time that he/she is rehabilitation eligible. This last change implies a role change in assessment procedures for the psychologist or whoever is responsible for student assessments in the school district.

Even more recently, the Department of Rehabilitation has created development funding for school and community agencies seeking to develop vocationally oriented transition services. In some DR offices an administrator has been appointed to specifically facilitate the development of these programs, assisting school and community agencies in preparing applications for funding.

New Position or Role Change - Vocational Assessment and Evaluation

12. In some school systems a new position of Vocational Evaluation Specialist has been created. In other districts the vocational assessment and evaluation function has been added to the role of an existing position.

We found increasing usage of vocational assessment in special needs populations in secondary education. We also found that assessment was being undertaken earlier in several innovating districts. Many districts are now providing a vocational assessment for all ninth or tenth grade youngsters in special education programs. In some districts a classified person has been trained to administer the assessments, working under the supervision of a certificated person with more assessment experience. In other areas the classroom teacher administers the assessment or shares the responsibility with an aide in the classroom. State department sponsored programs have played an important role in providing inservice to school districts in the area of vocational assessment and evaluation.⁵

Teacher Teams Play Curriculum Development Role

13. Several districts we interviewed have been using teams of teachers to develop revised curriculums.

Since the funding cutbacks of the late seventies, the school systems have been operating without the middle management layer of support that is usually instrumental in the creation of new programs. Many school systems had to reduce or even totally eliminate

program specialist positions in special education. On the regular education side, curriculum specialist or district director of curriculum positions have become a near extinct personnel species in education. In special education programs there is a drastic need for a revised curriculum that emphasizes not only a more functional vocational training content, but also provides teachers with the necessary tools to improve student self-esteem, teach students how to set goals, how to communicate effectively in their relationships and how to participate, study and succeed in regular high school classes. Additionally, special class teachers who have students in their classrooms for the majority of the day have been operating with "makeshift" materials that provide a modified kind of instruction in several different academic subjects. There are seldom systematic goals and objectives laid out in a sensible scope and sequence for each course. Materials that match the goals and objectives with the frequent assessments needed for special education learners are likewise missing.

We saw examples of the effective usage of teacher led and operated curriculum development teams. Several teachers volunteer to participate as members of a team to develop curriculum. The team meets throughout the year. Teachers are paid an additional stipend to pursue more intensive work over the summer months. The advantage of using teachers to develop curriculum is that support of the final product is usually great if the project is properly managed. When such groups can also operate with the benefit of expert consultants in areas where their own personal content knowledge is weak, the quality of the product - and subsequent usage rate - can be substantially increased. We have not yet seen the ideal combination of expert assistance coupled with teacher development teams. Nonetheless, the role shift toward using teachers to develop their own curriculum is meeting an acute current need.

Emergence of New Role of Regional Administrative Transition Specialist

14. Regional transition program developers have successfully facilitated innovative services in several regions of the state.

We have seen examples of some multi-district or even multi-SELPA (Special Education Local Planning Area) transition program development efforts that have been led by one administrator. This person is usually enterprising and has been able to create the resources to support their own position. In one instance, the position was totally funded by non-district monies acquired mostly through grants and fund raising. In his or her role, the regional admin-

⁵ Woolley, Van, "Vocational Assessment and Transition Planning for Special Education Students." 1987 In Press.

istrator is frequently charged with the distribution of Project WorkAbility funds to participating districts. The person also writes grants and seeks other funding sources to support transition related activities. In one area, the position was able to bring in enough funds to support a trainer to instruct ten teachers in a computer literacy/pre-employment inservice training program for teachers, secure funding for a major job development effort in one county, and create an inter-community network of agencies and businesses to assist in the development of transition programs. This communication function seems particularly appropriate to conduct on a regional basis. Regular and consistent meetings of schools and other agencies maintain the focus on building transition programs on a district by district basis while creating a forum for cooperative planning in areas of mutual interest.

Site Administrator Drives Redefinition of Mission of the High School

15. In a growing number of areas, special education transition program efforts are being led by the high school principal or his/her designee who is seeking similar reforms throughout the school system.

It is not uncommon for the mildly handicapped youngster in a high school program to have over 100 elective units to take in the regular program over a four year period. The choices that are available and the wisdom of selection of the available choices will be critical to the success of the student.

Many secondary school administrators are concerned that the school program is not adequately preparing all youngsters to be successful in a career and in the other aspects of adult life. These administrators are encouraging some exciting developments in the schools. In one school receiving a significant level of support from the State Department of Education, each student is encouraged to select a "career path." These career paths are broad vocational areas in which it has been determined that jobs are available in the community. The paths were developed by the teachers themselves. Students are urged to take specific elective courses that will comprise a master block of courses in the career path. Teachers are asked to tailor classroom assignments, when possible, toward these career/vocational interests. For instance, a student may be allowed to write a research project in history on the development of agricultural machinery.

The State Department of Education has identified a group of model career preparation sites throughout the state.⁶ In these schools there have been significant role shifts throughout the high school staff,

directly supported and sponsored by the principal and district administrators. In many of these programs there is an unusual level of evidence of many of the other role shifts that are described for special education programs in this report.

In summary, a related role shift that truly drives major change occurs when the high school principal and the district administrator in charge of special services team establish a career education program at the school site which includes all the necessary support to services for special education students.

Duty/Role Change - One Vice Principal Assigned Liaison to Special Education Administration

16. In some school systems we observed, one Vice Principal or Assistant Principal was charged with responsibility for special education linkages.

This specific role assignment may help to coordinate a special education/regular education program of innovations to better transition students. In many high schools throughout the state, the principal has become a kind of CEO who does not have the time to develop programs. When this is the case and assistant principals are assigned strictly by age or grade level, there can be a resultant loss of leadership support for special education program innovations. The designation of one high school administrator to liaison with the special education transition administrator significantly eased the job of innovating, at least from the point of view of some special education administrators.

⁶ Peggy Olivier is a contact person at the State Department of Education who can provide further information or contacts. California Dept. of Ed. Career Vocational Preparation Div., P.O. Box 944272, Sacramento, CA 94244-2720; (916) 445-8758.

Isolated, Yet Noteworthy Role Shifts

The following role shifts were observed in isolated cases. These changes were not observed with enough frequency to be described as trends. Yet, even as isolated instances, they may have value for transition system planners.

Job Qualifications for Special Education Administrator Changed

17. In at least one system, major changes were accomplished through placing a non-educator with a background in Rehabilitative Services in charge of building a multi-district cooperative program for transition.

In one of the most outstanding examples of real system change in special education programs for secondary aged students, a rehabilitation professional was brought in to coordinate a cooperative school district effort to revise the program to better transition students with disabilities. Special Education administrators are historically former teachers who have risen through the ranks to direct special education programs. There is no training or background in educational administration for the provision of the "case management" styled services required to arrange for and monitor a set of services for a student that will increase the likelihood of his/her success in employment and adult living. In the case we observed, the rehabilitation administrator was brought into the school system as a classified administrator.

Duty/Role Change - Guidance Department Facilitates District Integration of Special Services for all Students in Need

18. In at least one large school district in California, the special education "Vocational Transition Specialist" is participating in a guidance department effort to facilitate the coordination of all special services available to special education and "at risk" students.

In a large urban school system, there is a plethora of special services and positions that result from federally assisted programs in addition to Public Law 94-142 funded positions in special education. The need for programming services is very similar in the "disadvantaged" and special education populations. Recent reform movements supported by the State Department of Education encourage the breaking down of categorical barriers to services. But how? How do you go about breaking down these barriers and coordinating services?

An important first step in the case observed was to simply identify all the roles and services that are intended to provide transition services. With this awareness, the guidance department is offering in-service trainings to support role coordination. This system is also studying possible ways that a facilitator/coordinator position can be established to coordinate all the transition related programs available in the district.

In large urban systems, the guidance or pupil personnel department administrators would seem to have a natural role to play in the integration of specialist services to improve transition programs.

Role Merger - Vocational Education and Special Education Administrative Positions

19. One significant role merger was identified where the positions of Vocational Education Director and Special Education Director were merged into one position. This change took place in a medium sized suburban school district.

This district has a long and successful history of coordinating and integrating vocational and special education services. Organizationally, this change in structure would naturally drive the coordination of special education and vocational education functions in a given school district.

Coworkers Used as Job Coaches

20. The most novel role shift we saw was the use of coworkers as job coaches for special education students.

One instance was identified using coworkers on the job as coaches. Monetary stipends are provided to workers on the job site to provide coaching and support to special education students on the job. A supported employment trainer indicated that this practice is used in other areas as well. The practice would have a significant cost reduction impact when you think of the travel time and cost of paying one trainer to support one individual. The disadvantage of the approach is there is no assurance coworkers will be able to cope with the problems of the special education student without special training. The strategy, coupled with an effective training program for the coworkers may have promise for reducing the cost of job shadowing and job coaching for certain special education students.

New Position - Special Purpose Vocational Counselor

21. In a special project funded by a major oil corporation, special purpose counselors were provided to the school systems to encourage talented students with physical handicaps to pursue technological or scientific careers.

An interesting role shift was supported by private industry grants to high schools that agreed to cooperate in counseling able students with physical handicaps to pursue careers in scientific specialties in current demand in the business/industrial community. A vocational counseling role was funded by the corporate foundation to identify students with handicaps and offer incentives to these students to pursue careers that are in short supply in the oil industry. The impetus for the program came from a company that continually experienced difficulty in meeting affirmative action goals in certain job classifications. The project is still operating and continuing to support talented high school students in pursuing technological or scientific careers. This novel strategy also shows how it is possible to change the student's role in the transition process. First, students are identified early in high school for participation in the program, forcing an early career exploration commitment. Research has linked these early choices to increased student success. Secondly, the project offers an interesting demonstration of the possibilities of creating a fundamental shift in a student's self perception.

New Volunteer Positions Created - Parents as Job Coaches

22. In one school district, a group of volunteer parents were trained as job coaches for special education students.

One of the few examples of parental involvement in transition programs that was identified involved a group of parents who volunteered to be trained to coach special education students on the job. The parents were involved in a transition support group sponsored by the district. The district designed a training program for the parents and provided instruction to parents that included: familiarity with handicapping conditions, specialized tutorial techniques, and task analysis. The district is presently seeking resources to establish a paid volunteer coordinator position.

Funding Strategies

The first question to be asked by the inquiring administrative mind in the course of reading the previous section of this report—or perhaps immediately upon picking up this report, may well be, “how did they fund that?”

Several major funding strategies were identified during the course of the project. Below, a summary of each strategy is presented:

Department of Education Instructional Personnel Units for Designated Instructional Services

Designated Instructional Services are special education services provided by the school district for special therapies, specialized instruction and related services. (Eg. speech and language therapy, adapted physical education, vocational counseling.) These services are funded through the State Department of Education, which allocates funds to school districts and SELPA's (Special Education Local Planning Areas). School district administrators reading this report are well aware of the complexities of the funding formula for designated instructional services and it is beyond the scope of this report to explain the funding process. What is significant to report is that “Instructional Personnel Units” for “Designated Instructional Services” is the major source of funding that has been used to fund permanent “hard money” positions for improved transition programs.

Most districts converted instructional personnel units to vocational counseling positions in order to provide work experience programs, job coaching/shadowing, “case management,” and vocational counseling.

Public Law 94-142 Funding

Some districts prioritized transition programs for the use of the limited 94-142 flow-through funding that is received by the school district. This funding was used to fund or partially fund positions that focused on meeting the transition challenge.

Vocational Education Act Funding

There is a mandated ten percent “set aside” of the Vocational Education Act funding to the schools which must be used for the “handicapped” populations. When the school district receives its VEA allocation, ten percent of the allocation is channeled to special education programs.

VEA funding has supported positions that facilitate special education student access to vocational programs. The most frequent personnel uses of the funds that were found were the establishment of a special education/vocational education "facilitator" role, and allocations of aides to support special education students in vocational education programs.

Project WorkAbility

Project WorkAbility has become a multi-state agency sponsored funding program to support successful work experience efforts for special education students. The program was found to have had an enormous impact on the innovating school systems that were identified in the course of the research for this report. School systems used WorkAbility funding to establish either certificated and/or classified positions to promote work experience and career/vocational programming in the schools. In smaller, more rural school systems, the person(s) in these roles often appeared to be playing a significant change agent role in the school system.

WorkAbility funding is often pursued by SELPAs or by County Offices of Education. A similar change agent role seemed to be being played by the coordinator of these multi-district programs and projects. The flexible parameters of the funding have allowed many districts to create new roles within the school system. Numerous instances of the creative use of non-certificated Project WorkAbility supported positions to enhance career and vocational programming were observed in school systems.

Job Training and Partnership Act Funding (JTPA)

Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) funding, along with Project WorkAbility funds provided the most frequently observed usage of "soft" funds to support new positions in school districts. Most districts combined JTPA funding with WorkAbility funds to create new positions to support work experience and career/vocational programming efforts. Some school systems have also been successful in pursuing "start up" funding assistance for new programs through application to their local "Private Industry Council."

Department of Rehabilitation Program Development Assistance

Recently, the Department of Rehabilitation has provided support to stimulate the development of educational programs for the handicapped in local commu-

nities. Most of the schools that we observed to receive funding to assist in the establishment of vocationally oriented programs were non-public special education schools serving adult populations after students had graduated from high school. The funding has only recently been provided by DR and in the cases observed, required a matching commitment on the part of the school. In some areas the Department of Rehabilitation has provided a staff member to assist applicants in preparing the funding application.

Regional Center/Developmental Disability Program Development Assistance

Some school systems that were surveyed had received assistance from California Regional Centers (a case management, funding and human service agency for individuals with developmental disabilities) to establish supported employment positions for adults with developmental disabilities.

OSERS (Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services) Grants and Contracts

The federal government has made "transition" a special initiative and established grant and contract programs to support research and demonstration projects across the country. Two school systems identified in our research had identified major grants from OSERS for demonstration projects. The contracts and grants from the federal government have become highly competitive in recent years and require a high degree of federal grant writing expertise to secure.

Service Club Funding and Local Corporate Donations

Several schools contacted made it a regular practice to contact service clubs to establish an awareness of transition programs in the schools, request work experience or job training sites, and request small amounts of funds for special purposes.

Private Foundation Funding

Private foundation funding is a frequently overlooked source of funding for transition programs for the schools. One school in the study received a significant level of development funding from the vigorous pursuit of small \$2,000-\$10,000 private and corporate foundation grants. The pursuit of such funding does usually require the assistance of a public relations or development specialist position or

a portion of such a position. Some programs have used volunteer support to prepare funding requests to private foundations.

The above were the major sources of special education funding that were identified. Regular education funding is also available through SB 65 funding and other career/vocational and "at-risk" student funding sources. The time limitations on this grant have prevented the investigation of these resources.

In order to receive further information on the funding sources mentioned, the reader may:

1. Contact the local agency in your area for those programs that have local agencies.

or

2. Contact the state department offices of the programs mentioned for information on programs.

or

3. Contact the Education Transition Center in Sacramento. For some state level programs, specific contact persons have been identified as liaisons to the Department of Education. These persons may be of assistance to you.

or

4. Contact a state consultant in the Department of Education who provides service in your area. The consultant may have contact information for other state programs mentioned here.

Critical Factors for Change

In the course of the inquiry, we identified six critical factors that were evidenced in the more substantial examples of school systems successful in making role changes to meet the transition challenge.

Longevity of an Identified Change Agent

Where substantial changes in roles were found, there was a definite person behind the changes and that person had been working within the system for some time. In the examples we saw of role changes that could be described as major large scale system changes, there had been an administrator working in a change agent role for between seven and ten years. In lesser, but still substantial examples of key shifts in personnel, changes had taken place over a course of the minimum of three years, and again—an identifiable party was at the helm, steering the changes. Clearly, the type of changes necessary to impact on how jobs are configured on an organization chart take time. They also take the commitment of an administrator dedicated to a specific course of action. One of the keys to creating role changes within established systems is akin to a principle discovered by many an administrator in the school of hard knocks and well articulated by a famed early American industrialist. Alfred Sloane, when asked—to what he owed his enormously successful financial and industrial empire—is reported to have replied simply, "I outlasted 'em."

Vigorous Pursuit of Outside Resources

An ambition of the project was to identify systems that have changed roles without the use of additional outside resources. Instances of shifts in personnel energies toward more transition related activities were found not to require extra dollars. Yet, in every system that was observed to undergo significant role changes, outside resources played a significant role. Some form of grant or contract or additional assistance source was identified in each of the systems undergoing major changes. Possible explanations for this correlation are that school system positions are largely predefined and bound by law and credentialing regulation to establish certain sorts of roles. To amend the staffing pattern within a school system requires a large commitment to change and will require the addition of roles until legal and regulatory changes allow more freedom to shift roles. Another explanation might be that role changes are innovations and innovating school systems are the type of organizations that relentlessly pursue outside resources.

Infusion of Outsiders and "New Blood" into the System

The schools that were able to make significant role changes consistently made use of outsiders to create the changes. The outside resources that were used did not necessarily cost money. Some did. Some didn't. The point is that a variety of sources of "new blood" were attracted into the system to encourage the development of new roles or the changing of existent ones. Some examples of these resources are: staff development programs, joint funding applications with university teachers, use of state department sponsored consultant assistance networks, specialized content area consultants, other district innovators, and other resources within the district. "New blood" doesn't have to come from outside the school system. One district invited the regular education curriculum director to assist in the development of a revised secondary curriculum for special education. As a result of this invitation, the special education team was invited to an upcoming curriculum development inservice. The learnings from these sessions steered the development effort. The point is that additional resources are not always in some far flung esoteric funding source. Some may be found in the system's own backyard. The other major point is that in the systems observed, there was a high degree of openness to any and all sorts of outside assistance that could bring about change in the desired directions.

Low Profile Character of Change Agents and Willingness to Delegate Significant Responsibilities

The administrators who were responsible for the greatest changes in the systems observed appeared to do so in a quiet, patient, methodical and non-flashy manner while demonstrating a willingness to delegate and share responsibility.

Recent research on "intrapreneurs" (change agents inside organizations) indicates that they are frequently "idea" people who have difficulty in letting go of their specific notions so that others can implement their innovations. This attitude was not prevalent in the people who had successfully orchestrated role changes within systems. By and large, the administrators and facilitators creating role changes appeared to be individuals with a high degree of willingness to delegate critical functions to others. They did not appear to have to "hold on" to ideas through each and every stage of their execution. They did seem to have a firm grasp on a certain direction. Yet the innovators we saw were able to enroll other pathfinders as well as themselves in navigating the course.

Willingness to Manipulate Personnel Policy and Procedure

Many of the role shifts created within the systems observed required a change—or at least a manipulation of personnel policy or procedure. For instance, new classified positions were observed to have been created which required a separate personnel classification and pay scale. The creation of these positions did not seem to be a problem in those innovating districts. This would seem to indicate that there was a willingness within the personnel departments of those systems to cooperate with the changes. An overlooked role in the transition system change business may be the classified personnel administrator responsible for establishing new positions and revising others. The point here is that in the innovating systems, personnel policies and procedures appeared to be viewed as malleable to the emergent needs of the schools.

The Beginnings of a Redefinition of the Business of Education

Most of the role changes observed took place in the area of related educational services and new classified positions rather than in the role of the classroom teacher. One notable exception to this factor exists in the case of the programs for individuals with severe handicaps that have adopted a community based learning approach. This finding may point to the fact that the business of the school has always been classroom instruction. If the process of transitioning from school to work and adult life is to be made more meaningful, the school may need to expand the definition of its business beyond the classroom and into such businesses as technical training, the employment agency, case management, and personal growth. This redefinition appeared to be occurring in those systems that were making the most significant role changes.

PERSONNEL PLANNING GUIDELINES

A variety of approaches to personnel planning were found in those schools and agencies changing roles to improve transition services for students. Three different approaches will be provided here for the benefit of personnel planners seeking to make role changes in their own systems.

Planning Option 1- Plan from Existent Roles⁷

In the state of Arizona, there is a statewide inter-agency planning effort under way which is planning from existent personnel roles. In this approach, all the transition roles are identified. Within each of these roles, the specific additional duties or functions that need to be performed are specified.

Planning Option 2- Plan for the Change Agent Role⁸

In a summer institute workshop in California, a group of transition planners instituted a model for planning for the Transition Specialist change agent role. This model is a simple three step process for planning a specific role:

Step One- specify competencies

The competencies that are desired for the position are specified. These competencies become the personnel functions that will be used to assess what strategy will be used to create the position.

Step Two- list existing roles that perform some of the functions

The existing roles in the organization are now examined to see who is performing some of the personnel functions needed in the transition specialist role.

Step Three- select a strategy to create the transition specialist role

Select one of the following options to create the critical role of the transition specialist:

Scenario One

A present role is very close to the stated competencies. Add a few functions to the present role and shift others from the present role to other positions.

Scenario Two

A person in the district or county has the necessary experience to perform the role, but is presently in

⁷ Kaney, Heather-Education Transition Center (see directory)

⁸ Mishlove, Steve-Arizona Department of Education (see directory)

another role. Shift the person into the transition specialist role. Shift previous job responsibility to another.

Scenario Three

The needed expertise is not available. Create a new role and secure the funding necessary for the role.

Scenario Four

Upon examining present roles, it is felt that the persons now in place will be able to create the changes necessary to an effective transition program if they receive the proper training. Establish a limited term temporary position to provide the training and consultation to existing staff.

Option 3- Restructure Special Education Services

The restructuring of special education services will only be appropriate in those programs that are on the edge of a major restructuring for other reasons in addition to the transition program planning. The process of organizational restructuring is complex and should ideally be undertaken with specialized assistance. It can usually only be done with the active involvement and support of the upper levels of administration in a school system. Organizational restructuring, improperly approached, can result in major staff and morale problems within a school system. As Robert Townsend suggests (the author of *Up the Organization*) organizational restructuring should be undertaken as sparingly as possible, just as major surgery. Major surgery and organizational restructuring have much in common in the area of risks and complications.

Analysis of Role Shifting Patterns in Transition

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